The word "work" (or works/working) appears in 623 verses in the Bible (KJB), and appears at least once in almost every book. As Christians rightly give praise to the Lord Jesus Christ for his gift of Salvation outside of works, sadly I have witnessed many who are ignoring the importance of works. In this article, we will explore the Biblical definitions of work, and what the Lord Jesus Christ expects of His sheep.

There are two types of work the Bible talks about; work concerning basic needs of the body (food, clothing, shelter), and works of the spirit, which can consist of good works, or bad works (vanity, unrighteousness, iniquity).

**Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. -Hebrews 1:9**

*But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?* -James 2:20

As we have covered in other articles, the Bible teaches that we are saved by the gift of God (Eph 2:8), and the good works we do is a result of the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Good works of righteousness are the reflection of our faith in Christ, but without them, we have no examinable evidence of our faith.

*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.* -Matthew 7:20

Of course, part of our fruits is what we confess to men (Mat 10:32), but the work is the other part. Confessing the Lord Jesus Christ with a repentant heart is only the first step in our Christian faith.

In discussion with other Christians, I have sometimes pointed out the iniquity in a certain preacher or minister, and have received a response where they explain that the person couldn't be wrong because he is really smart, works very hard, has written books, and spoken to thousands of people. This is a logically fallacious argument. We need to understand that just because someone works hard, or has a following, does not automatically mean they are producing good fruit. I simply point out that Adolf Hitler was really smart, worked very hard, wrote books, and spoke to thousands of people, but he was working unrighteousness, so HARD work does not necessarily equate GOOD work.

*Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.* -Matthew 23:1-3

I'm sure the scribes and Pharisees were smart, hard-working men, but they were wrong in what they were doing. **Just because a man is working hard, doesn't mean he's working right.**

In Revelation 2, Jesus Christ speaks to each of the churches and says "I know thy works," because despite the fact that Christ has saved our souls from eternal suffering, we will still be judged by our works. Christ recognizes us, and labels us, by the work we do.

*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven... Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord... And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* -Matthew 7:21-23
Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. -1 Corinthians 3:13-15

Again, we are saved by grace, not of works, but the works we do is a direct result of the grace given to us, and many Christians make the mistake of thinking their eternal soul is the only thing at stake. The Lord can take away our health, wealth, safety, comfort, family, friends, and reward in heaven. If we refuse to do the good works that come with being saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, there are consequences.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. -Galatians 6:7

A good father punishes his children for doing wrong. If you are a child of God, then you will be chastened for works of iniquity and vanity.

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. -Deuteronomy 8:5

He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes. -Proverbs 13:24

But if he doesn't chasten you for what you do wrong, you may not be a child of God.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. -Hebrews 12:5-8

However, if we would judge ourselves, and turn from iniquity to do the good works of the Lord, God would not have to chasten us.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. -1 Corinthians 11:31-32

God chastens us for doing vain works of iniquity FOR OUR SAKES because He promised we would reap what we sow, and the Lord does not want the sheep of His flock to suffer the earthly consequences for our sin. He's saved us from the eternal consequences, but we still have more to lose, and a good father wants his children to have the best.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. -Galatians 5:19-21

Identifying Works of Iniquity

adultery (n): The unfaithfulness of any married person to the marriage bed; all manner of lewdness or unchastity, as in the seventh commandment
This is sexually provocative action outside the bounds of a husband and wife.

fornication (n): The incontinence or lewdness of unmarried persons, male or female
This is sexually provocative action between two people who have not been married. In Biblical definitions of marriage, gays and lesbians cannot marry, and fornication applies to them as well.
uncleanness (n): Foulness; dirtiness; filthiness; Lewdness; incontinence
This covers a wide range of activity involved in adultery, fornication, drunkenness, gluttony, sodomy, and other specific activities which would leave the body and spirit in a state of self-inflicted disgust. Cussing is a good example.

lasciviousness (n): Looseness; irregular indulgence of animal desires; wantonness; tendency to excite lust, and promote irregular indulgences
This covers a wide range of lusts of which the person involved is unable to control him/her self, and does include, but is not limited to, sexual desire. This can include phrases of speech, lewd dancing, and other activities which lead to exciting lust outside the boundaries of marriage.

idolatry (n): The worship of idols, images, or any thing made by hands, or which is not God; excessive attachment or veneration for any thing, or that which borders on adoration
This includes, but is not limited to, statues of gods/goddesses, witchcraft altars, pagan rituals (things like Halloween or Christmas), reveling over movie stars or music artists (like American Idol), and other similar adorations.

witchcraft (n): The practices of witches; sorcery; enchantments; intercourse with the devil; power more than natural
Incantations, scrying, magick, superstitions (i.e. actions or phrases to bring "luck" or ward off evil spirits), and many other activities fall under this category. Most of our American holiday celebrations contain much of this, and other like traditions. (e.g. marriage ceremonies)

hatred (n): Great dislike or aversion; enmity; an aversion to evil, and may spring from utter disapprobation; or may spring from offenses or injuries done by fellow men, or from envy or jealousy, in which case it is usually accompanied with malevolence or malignity
There is a hatred of evil and sin, which is a good thing (Pro 8:13), but the reference in Galatians is referring to hatred of fellow men. Malevolence or malignity or malice is a desire to do evil to others. Hatred is typically initiated by one evil action inciting another evil action, and if both parties continue in hatred, it becomes a never-ending cycle.

variance (n): Difference that produces dispute or controversy; discord; at variance in disagreement; in a state of difference
There is nothing wrong with having a disagreement (Pro 27:17), but having a disagreement in a state of difference is to be at variance. To be "at variance" with another Christian is to be in disagreement for the purpose of sowing discord among brethren (Pro 6:19), and those that do this are labeled as liars according the Bible.

emulation (n): Striving to equal or do more than others to obtain carnal favors or honors; desire of superiority; competition; rivalry accompanied with a desire of depressing another
This comes from people who are trying to gain recognition from men instead of God, and a prideful heart can easily lead to this type of attitude in ministry. This is the reason why awards (and award ceremonies) in Christian organizations are dangerous.

wrath (n): Violent anger; vehement exasperation; indignation
This is anger when left unchecked. The wrath of men is a blind rage that goes out of control. The whiplash of anger is so great, it often leaves on-lookers confused as to what sparked it.

strife (n): Contention in anger or enmity; contest; struggle for victory; quarrel or war; opposition; contrariety; contrast
This is when a disagreement occurs, and one (or both) of the participants extend the disagreement for the purpose warring against an opponent. A person who causes strife typically does it for the purpose of being right, instead of the purpose of Biblical rebuke or correction. If someone in opposition of us cannot disagree without continuing to war against us, refusing rebuke or correction, we should let them go.

sedition (n): A local or limited insurrection in opposition to civil authority
This is not to be confused with peaceful protests, lobbying, petitioning, or striking an employer. Sedition has to do with people who gather for the purpose of opposing an act of justice by government authority. The crowds swarming around Pilate, and demanding him to release a known criminal (Barabbas), is an example of sedition.
**heresy (n):** An error of opinion respecting some fundamental doctrine; an offense against Christianity, consisting in a denial of some of its essential doctrines, publicly proclaimed and stubbornly maintained

A heresy is a denial of basic principles taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. For example, Catholicism is heresy in that it performs the mass, which is a denial of the once and for all payment of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary. Individuals can also be a 'heretic', for example, Rick Warren, who denies the doctrine of repentance in Salvation.

**envying (n):** Mortification experienced at the supposed prosperity and happiness of another. The inward feeling of uneasiness and/or covetousness when something considered "good" happens to someone else. (I put "good" in quotations because not every benefit towards prosperity is a blessing.) When someone else achieves or receives something considered prospered, inwardly saying, "why can't that happen to me," is an example of envying.

**murder (n):** The act of unlawfully killing a human being with premeditated malice, by a person of sound mind.

This is not to be confused with taking a life in defense, or by civil authority for punishment and justice. Murder is committed when malice and hatred are involved in a premeditated (pre-planned) attempt to kill.

**drunkenness (n):** Intoxication; inebriation; a state in which a person is overwhelmed or overpowered with spirituous liquors, so that his reason is disordered; Habitually ebriety or intoxication

Whether intentional or not, drunkenness occurs when consuming fermented food or beverages, which has been commonly known to lead a person to commit other sins aforementioned in this list.

**revellings (n):** A feast with loose and noisy jollity; clamorous merriment

Those who celebrate loudly and boisterously, commonly involved with drunkenness, singing, and/or dancing. Reveling often involves those who seek to be the center of attention, and care not for disrupting the peace and tranquility. 

Wassailing during the pagan Christmas/Yule/Saturnalia holiday is an example of reveling.

(All above definitions were taken from Noah Webster's Dictionary, 1828, retrieved Jan 10, 2014, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

All throughout the Bible, we have warnings against each of these works of iniquity (sin/unrighteousness). Sadly, the modern "Laodician" churches seem to care more about pitch-in dinners and being entertained with music, than they do in preaching rebuke and reproof against iniquity, and cleansing their lives for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the other end of the spectrum, let's look at the works of the Spirit (good fruits):

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.* -Galatians 5:22-26

**Identifying Works of the Spirit**

**love (n):** An affection of the mind excited by beauty and worth of any kind, or by the qualities of an object which communicate pleasure, sensual or intellectual; it is opposed to hatred

As we saw earlier, hatred is a desire for evil to be done to another, so love would be a desire for good to be done to another. *Love is Biblically defined as upholding the law of God on behalf of another.* Keeping the commandments of God in moral law will automatically lead one to love God and his neighbor. (*Mat 22:37*)

**joy (n):** Passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good; happiness; rejoicing; gladness

This doesn't require much explanation. One can have a temporary joy founded in material things, but permanent joy can only be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. (*Mat 25:21*)
In my personal experience, I have never been in Christian group discussions, nor heard any sermons preached, that have clearly defined these terms. As we look over these and examine ourselves, we should be able to see our weakness, and what we need to work on.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? -2 Corinthians 13:5

reprobate (n): A person abandoned to sin; one lost to virtue and religion
(See 'reprobate', Noah Webster's Dictionary, 1828, retrieved Jan 13, 2014, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

If we are saved by Jesus Christ, then our duty is to examine ourselves continually to make sure our flesh is in accordance with the Word of God. Our works are results of our faith, and that means our work should be an example of the Lord Jesus Christ working in us.

There is another type of work that is most often ignored in modern-day Christianity, and that is vain works. Although works of iniquity can be labeled as "vain," not all works of vanity are necessarily iniquity.

vain (adj): Empty; worthless; having no substance, value or importance
(See 'vain', Noah Webster's Dictionary, 1828, retrieved Jan 13, 2014, [webstersdictionary1828.com])
Murder is a work of iniquity because it is unrighteousness and injustice, and it is also labeled vain, because it does nothing for loving God or our neighbors, which is the summation of the law and prophets in the Bible. What I will cover next will upset many Christians, but I pray that the reader will at least stop and muse on this topic.

Many times, I have witnessed a Christian have a legitimate problem, like his car breaking down or losing his job, so he goes to his Christian brethren, tells them about his problem, and they respond with some cutesy phrase like, "Remember, God is in control," all the while doing nothing to help. However, these Christians still believe that their cutesy comments are actually helping the Christian in need, and they are what I personally like to call "shake-n-bake" Christians.

(Shake-n-bake commercial from 1976)

In the video, you'll see a little girl who wants to help her mother fix dinner, and so her mom let's her shake the bag of chicken in preparation for cooking. What they don't show in the video is the time mom has to put in working to make sure they have money for groceries, buying the groceries, making sure the car is in good upkeep to bring the groceries home, organize the groceries, pull out all the ingredients, prep the chicken and all the sides, cooking, baking, setting the table, serving the meal, cleaning up, doing the dishes, etc. In her young, innocent, naive state of mind, the little girl honestly thinks she helped by shaking a bag, and I understand this is cute in little children because they don't yet have an understanding of all the aspects of the job, but in reality of all the work that needed to be done, the little girl did not help at all.

Again, we find this kind of thing cute in children, with their lack of understanding, and it can be quite comical at times, but in an adult, it is vanity, slothfulness, and in most cases a point of annoyance and frustration. Jesus Christ said we should be like children concerning malice (i.e. little children don't hold grudges like adults do - Mar 10:15), but we should NOT be like children in our understanding.

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. -1 Corinthians 14:20

I find it interesting that the lazy Christians are typically the first to complain, the first to criticize, and the first bring malicious contention. That's why, after the fall, God put Adam to work; He did it for Adam's sake, so he wouldn't have time to get in trouble.

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. -Genesis 3:17-19

When the Christian is in need of help, and his brethren come to him to say "Remember God's in control," it's no different than when the little girl shakes the bag and thinks she helped. What exactly does it profit? What work has been done? I understand that many Christians reading this will make excuses for other Christians' cutesy phrase (they do it all the time), claiming that he/she was just trying to encourage them, but that's NOT what the Bible tells us. According to God's Word, they are words spoken in vanity:

If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. -James 2:15-17

So we see a Christian with a legitimate problem, and another Christian comes up to say "God bless and good luck with that," but he/she does nothing. At the beginning of this article, we quoted the label the Bible puts on men who say, rather than do:

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? -James 2:20
The "cutesy" phrase a Christian come up with in response to legitimate problem is VANITY. It does not encourage. It does not show faith. It does nothing. This is what the Bible is telling us, based on the definition of "vain." In reality, it would be better for Christian brethren to say nothing, than to say something vain.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. -James 3:6

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. -Ecclesiastes 5:2

The Bible tells us that many men would profess to know God, but in works, they deny him. They might work hard in some areas, but they don't work right.

For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. -Titus 1:10-16

People most often make excuses for a Christian's "good intentions," rather than judging their actions. I don't argue people's intentions, because even adulterers, witches, drunkards, and thieves believe they have the best of intentions, and the road to hell is paved with them. If we would do more actual work, and make effort to take action rather than give opinions or advice, we wouldn't need to debate about intentions because the proof would be in the pudding, or in other words, a man would prove the righteousness of his faith by action instead of word.

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. -James 2:18

Saying cutesy little phrases, which often comes out of the example set by modern-day churches, doesn't do anything to help the situation. The point that needs to be emphasized here by those who say the vain, cutesy one-liners is this: They are seeking to be recognized to be men and women of faith, without actually having to do anything to prove it.

Understandably, there are some people that are going through hard times themselves, and are unable to help their brethren, but even then, if he/she absolutely feels they need to say something, a much better, in-private (one-on-one) response would be, "Listen, I haven't the wealth or knowledge to help you with that situation, but know that I will pray that the Lord will give me what I need to help you, or send someone else to you who can help." But overall, we really don't need to say anything if we DO it. If we have the ability to help someone else, even by prayer, then we don't need to say a word because the Lord will see our actions.

Even if it is prayer, everyone can do something, but in modern-day churchianity, Christians don't actually do as much as they talk about doing. Belief in the existence of the one True Living God is good, but it's not what separates us because devils also believe in the one True Living God.

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? -James 2:18-20

If we don't do works that show our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then how would someone be able to tell the difference between us and the Devil? Some Christians may be confused by this, but the Bible tells us that Satan himself was beautiful, wise, and bright.
Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. -Ezekiel 28:17

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. -John 7:24

If we Christians are not doing the good works of the Lord, then people can't tell the difference between Christianity and the world. We are intended to be a peculiar people, sanctified (set apart) from the world.
(Read "Did Christ Come to Bring Peace?" here at creationliberty.com for more details.)

From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. -Matthew 16:21-22

We see Jesus Christ telling His disciples the truth about what will happen to Him and the suffering He will have endure, and Peter, instead of considering how he could help, says a vain, cutesy phrase: "No Lord, that won't happen to you." How does Christ respond?

But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. -Matthew 16:23

Here, Jesus Christ shows us that those who desire to respond in a cutesy manner have no desire for the things of God. Though they are often defended as "trying to help," or "trying to be an encouragement," in reality, they are an offense.

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. -Matthew 15:8

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak. -Psalm 12:2

Here are some examples of vain phrases I've heard/read in response to a need:

- "Just remember, God's in control."
- "Good luck with that."
- "If you know God, you know peace."
- "God'll get ya through it."
- "It's all written on your heart."
- "You just need to pay your tithes more."
- (Read "Is Tithe a Christian Requirement?" here at creationliberty.com for more details.)
- "You just gotta' have faith."
- "Remember that Jesus loves you."
- "God knows what you need."

Man is like to vanity; his days are as a shadow that passeth away. -Psalm 144:4

O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. -Matthew 12:34-37
idle (adj): Inactive; doing nothing; useless; vain; ineffectual; unfruitful; not productive of good; of no importance
(See 'Idle', Noah Webster's Dictionary, 1828, retrieved Jan 14, 2014, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

I have been condemned by many Christians for rebuking people that use these vain, cutesy one-liners. It is so common for idle Christians to justify these popular idle phrases because they ALSO use the same vain words, and thereby they are really trying to justify themselves.

*And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. -Luke 16:15*

I don't care how much a Christian wants to try to justify himself, or someone else, for saying these vain, useless one-liners in response to a need, the Bible says this is vanity, and shows a faith that is dead. In the book of Acts, what did the Christians do when people were in need?

*And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. -Acts 2:45*

Food for thought: How many of us would be willing to sell our possessions to provide a need for another?

Even worse are Christians I have seen that have pointed out a need, and do nothing about it. I have watched a man/woman identify a problem to Christian brethren who needed the help (sometimes even insult them in the process), and then just say, "you should do something about that." **Pointing out something needing to be done, but doing nothing about it, does nothing to help the situation. It's unfruitful vanity! As a Christian, if we are convicted enough to point it out, we should be convicted enough to do something about it**, even if all we can do is take it to the Lord in prayer, but I see many Christians just whine and complain at the one doing the work that he/she isn't doing enough!

Another example are the Christians who "give advice" when it is unasked for, and they think they're helping. It's one of those "you missed a spot" Christians who don't really do much of anything but sit back and analyze the work of others, thinking that their advice is golden. If everyone sat around giving unwarranted advice, nothing would get accomplished.

Further still are Christians who see what needs to be done, and instead of just doing it, they ask, "Is there anything I can do to help?" The question is not wrong to ask, if one honestly doesn't know what to do in helping, but I often see Christians that know what needs to be done, but instead of just picking up and doing it, they ask about it because they are looking for others to acknowledge a "charitable nature" in themselves, without them actually having to do anything or take any initiative.

They want to **APPEAR** to be doers of the Word, without having to do anything.

I don't often do this, but I'm going to tell a parable of my own. Two women were shopping at a department store, and a well-dressed man walks down the aisle and notices piece of trash on the floor, so he picks it up to throw it away later. One woman says to the other, "That was kind of him to do." The other woman says, "Oh, he only does that because he's the manager." Just as they were speaking, the actual manager turns the corner and says, "Ladies, that man does not even work at this store, he's the manager of a restaurant down the street. He doesn't pick up trash because he's a manager; he's a manager because he picks up trash." **(THAT should be a Christian's work ethic! -- Seeing what needs to be done, and doing it.)**
Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. -Proverbs 6:6-8

As someone who has been involved in ministry for a number of years, I can say that when I am feeling discouraged in the work of ministry, words do nothing for me. The ones who really encourage me are NOT the ones that send me a cutesy one-liner. Those kind of Christians are more an irritation because they send idle words. The ones who really encourage me are the DOERS of the good works of the Lord.

Are we Christians going to sit around and talk ourselves to death? Or are we going to pick up and start doing what needs to be done?

Many Christians say they don't know what needs to be done, or that they "don't know God's Will for their life." Often, I find those who say these things do not read their Bibles much, and they sit around idle, waiting for God to send them an angel and give them a personal message. The Bible already gives us commandments in the New Testament, and tells us directly what to do:

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. -Matthew 22:37-40

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. -Matthew 28:18-20

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. -2 Timothy 2:15

Of course, there are many more commandments we can observe beyond these, but it seems like so many Christians don't read their Bibles. As a Christian, if you are not going out and sharing the Gospel with others, then support someone who IS doing it. Maybe you know of a minister down the street who is sharing the Gospel, but you don't have much to give, then offer to mow his grass for him so he can spend more time doing the work of the Lord. Everybody can do something; even if the only thing you can do is serve as a bad example to others, everybody can do something.

Many Christians sit around waiting for God to personally appear to them and give them a message, because it's a convenient excuse to do nothing.

As a side note, there are some Christians out there who find it difficult getting anything done in a church setting. I've received many emails from Christians over the past year who have testified to this, and their frustrations with their church leadership's red tape. I, too, have experienced this problem of not being able to get things done in a church setting due to church politics of having to get special favors from the right person, or get "official ordainment" and permission in order to do any work. In the above verses, did you see any place where Jesus said you had to have ordainment in order to teach all nations? Do you have to get a pastor's permission to baptize someone? Do you need special favors to study and share the Gospel? Sadly, I was able to get more accomplished outside of church congregations than I ever did within them, and if that's what it takes, then we do what's right by God, not what's convenient by men.

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. -Acts 5:29

There is no excuse for a Christian not to be doing the good works listed out in the Bible. If you can't do the work for some reason, then support someone who is, just make sure you're doing/supporting GOOD works and fruits of the Spirit, and not vain works of iniquity. If you will hate vain works of unrighteousness, and favor to do good works of righteousness, there will be blessing and reward, either in this life or in eternity.
For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. -Matthew 16:27

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
- Luke 6:35

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. - 1 Corinthians 3:8

Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.
- 2 John 1:8

And concerning yourself, if you want to learn how to set your mind straight, and think properly, then do the works of the Lord.

Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established. - Proverbs 16:3